

THE New Bedford fine cotton goods strike is an impressive strike in many ways. Here are 26,000 textile workers most of whom have never been involved in a big struggle before. There are French-Canadians coming from the farm lands and woods of Quebec and Labrador. There are Portuguese workers coming from both the mainland of Portugal and from many little islands off the coast of Africa owned by Portugal. These (with some Poles and Greeks) make up the bulk of the unskilled workers. Then there are the skilled English workers separated from the rest and under the domination of clever and reactionary officials of their craft unions.

For sixteen years there has been no strike in New Bedford. Most of those who did participate in the 1912 strike have passed out of the picture. To the youth and to most of the women strikers a strike is an absolutely new and strange event.

Into this situation came the organizers of the left wing building the New Bedford Textile Workers Union affiliated to the National Textile Mill Committees. The misleaders of the American Federation of Labor used to say that these workers were so backward, that they were "unorganizable." The answer of the New Bedford workers to this slander was to rally round the new union leaders by the thousands and to begin the building up of a large and militant organization.

At first it was difficult to form a picket line. But soon the experience of the workers themselves made them understand the necessity for such a picket line and now they come on the picket lines by the thousands. At critical times literally 7000 have turned out *en masse*. This is a tremendous achievement for the organizers of the new union. This long powerful line has been a revelation to the bosses, to the corrupt officials of the American Federation of Labor and to

the would-be scabs. It is this picket line that has taught discipline and union solidarity to the workers in New Bedford. It is this picket line that has closed down the 56 mills in New Bedford now for over 3 months.

As the weeks have gone by the spirit of the workers has risen steadily. These workers are fresh reserves now thrown into struggle for the first time and as fresh reserves they do not hesitate to enter the battle with vigor and aggressiveness. When Batty, one of the American Federation of Labor officials, wanted to beat up our organizer Beal on the picket line the workers soon had Batty bleeding on the ground. When organizer Murdoch was arrested the first time the workers made a magnificent demonstration around the mill gates. When Beal was put on trial with 12 other good fighters all of them came into court with red carnations and with fine spirit defied the capitalist court.

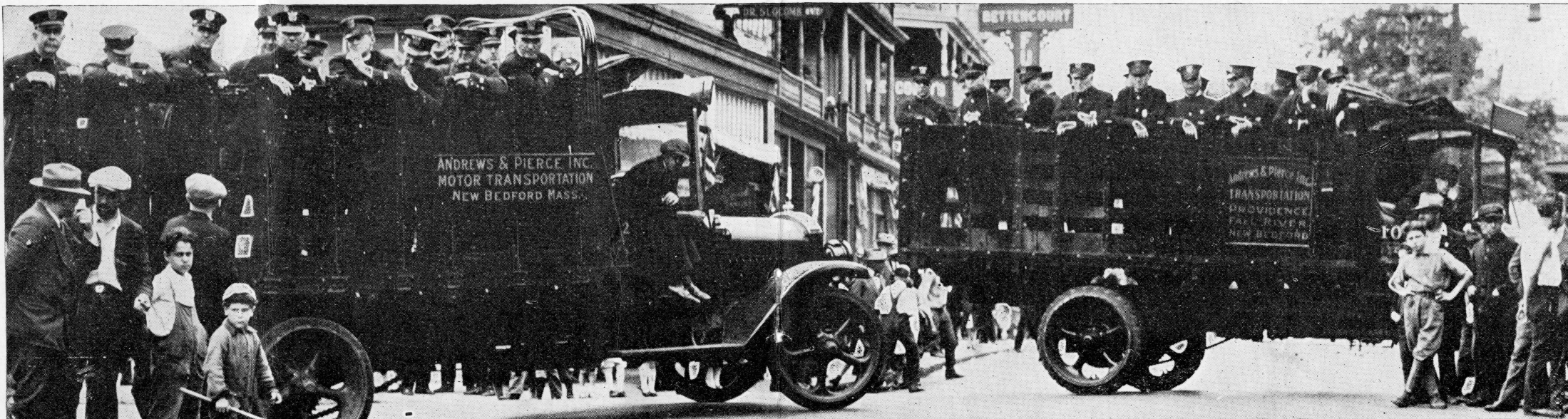


Photo New Bedford Evening Standard

TRUCKLOADS OF POLICE ARE ON DAILY DUTY DURING THE NEW BEDFORD TEXTILE STRIKE. THEY ARE HERE PREPARED TO BREAK UP THE STRIKERS' PARADE

Twenty-six Thousand Marching Men In New Bedford

By ALBERT WEISBORD

At first the police took on a "friendly" "smiling" role. The strikers were firm and the mill owners were not yet ready to open the mills. Besides this would win over the "general public" and liberals who might be looking on. This tactic succeeded remarkably well. The A. F. of L. officials began to praise the police as the best friends of the workers. This was heartily seconded by the Socialist Party which in press and on

The Case Of John Porter

JOHN Porter is in a military prison at Ft. Adams, R. I., subjected to the most brutal treatment in the effort to break his spirit and prevent him from making a militant defense before the court martial. Arrested June 18 as a result of his activities as Vice President of the New Bedford Textile Workers Union and Organizer of the Young Workers (Communist) League, Porter is forced to work 10 hours daily 7 days per week, almost starved, deprived of reading matter, and now has been thrown into solitary confinement.

The case of Porter is of great importance to the working class. He entered the army at the age of 16, led into the service by the false promises of recruiting signs. After serving 2 years and 4 months of his 3 year enlistment, he realized that the army is against the interest of the workers and deserted last August. When the strike began, he soon became Vice President of his union, and after seeing the support of the Young Workers (Communist) League for the young textile workers, he joined the organization and became organizer. Then, he was turned over to the Army and faces court-martial not only on the technical charge of desertion but is liable to life imprisonment for taking part in strike activities and joining a Communist group while subject to military law.

A Porter Defense Committee of the International Labor Defense is mobilizing the workers for the defense of Porter.

Porter declares that he would give his life rather than turn his face away from the working class. The workers must come to his defense, and prevent a life sentence to a living death at the Governor's Island prison intended to terrorize all soldiers who may become class conscious. —PAUL CROUCH.

the platform heaped the highest praise on the Mayor, the Chief of Police, and the police force for their wonderful "smiling" aid to the workers. Throughout the liberal and socialist world the impression became current that the police of New Bedford were exceptional gentlemen.

Having succeeded in putting over this stuff (the police were much more clever than in Passaic) the police were able to take the next step. This background of gentleness was provided only in order to give the police a free hand later. For if the police clubbed down the workers later, who would believe it? Did not the Socialist Party and good liberals and labor "leaders" say the police were "friendly"? How could the police club? If they clubbed it was only because these damned radicals were stirring up trouble and creating violence and rioting where none had existed before.

The next step of the police was to cause trouble on

tences waiting for them. This is the present situation.

And now the mills are preparing to open. The newspapers are carrying the announcements. All forces are strained to meet this cardinal test. The principal leaders of the union are in jail. The clubs of the police are now out. When the mill gates open then the smiles will be gone. Everything has been done "peacefully" so far. The leaders have been put away "peacefully". The picket lines have been attacked "peacefully". The Socialists and liberals and labor fakers have given the police free play. Now the "real works" can begin.

Yes, now the real works can begin. But the new union is not deterred. New leaders have sprung up. Every effort is being made by the International Labor Defense to get the leaders out of jail in time and adequately protect all cases so that all decks will be cleared for action. The tension is growing. The "real works" is beginning soon. The mills are opening up.



Photo New Bedford Evening Standard

THOUSANDS OF STRIKERS MARCHING WITH UNBROKEN RANKS DESPITE THE NEW BEDFORD MAYOR AND POLICE



Photo New Bedford Evening Standard

SOME OF THE MILL BARONS' UNIFORMED INTEREST-DEFENDERS IN NEW BEDFORD